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ABSTRACT

Statewide learner competency and assessment systems in 11 states were examined. Information was gathered through telephone interviews and a review of materials on the learner competency and assessment systems being used/developed in each state. Special attention was paid to the states' activities regarding development of the following: systematic process for developing the competencies; curriculum package directly related to the competencies; appropriate assessment instruments; and procedures for recognizing learner achievement of competencies. Statewide systems were currently operating in the following states: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Oregon, and Washington. In Colorado, Connecticut, Oregon, and Washington, competencies were drawn from the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and often had an employment orientation influenced by the work of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon required local programs to use specific assessment instruments, and four states established statewide procedures for recognizing when learners achieve their competencies. The remaining four states studied --Iowa, Kentucky, Texas, and West Virginia--were in varying stages of developing statewide learner competency/assessment systems. (Appendixes constituting approximately 80% of this document contain summaries of the activities undertaken in each of the 11 states and sample state competencies and examples of learner recognition activities/certificates.) (MN)

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ED 405 482

A Review of Statewide Learner Competency and Assessment Systems

March 1996

Division of Adult Education and Literacy
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
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INTRODUCTION

Ensuring program accountability by focusing on issues of program quality and evaluation has been an emphasis of the Adult Education Act (AEA) since passage of the 1988 AEA program amendments. Provisions of the National Literacy Act of 1991 further expanded accountability and evaluation requirements by mandating the establishment of state indicators of program quality. As a result of these provisions, states have focused their attention on determining:

- How to assess whether a local adult education program is succeeding;
- Key variables related to student performance that should be measured; and
- The relationship between measuring student performance and the content of the instructional program.

The diversity of goals of adult learners, who mostly participate on a voluntary basis complicates efforts to ensure program accountability and to implement more rigorous evaluation strategies. As stated in the legislation, the goals of adult education programs are to:

1. Enable adults to acquire the basic educational skills necessary for literate functioning;
2. Provide these adults with sufficient basic education to enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs and obtain and retain productive employment so that they might more fully enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship; and
3. Enable adults who so desire to continue their education to at least the level of secondary school.

Due to the diversity of learner goals and the voluntary nature of individual participation, there has been considerable flexibility in instruction within most adult education programs. Rather than following a formal curriculum package, programs typically use a variety of instructional materials, including materials that are either purchased from publishers or are

Through telephone interviews, as well as a review of materials on the development of statewide learner competency and assessment systems, the following types of information were obtained:

- Background data on the processes states have undertaken in developing competency and assessment systems.
- Learner competencies selected and sample curriculum guides to support instruction related to these competencies.
- Assessment instruments and procedures for measuring learner competencies.
- Procedures for recognizing the progress learners make in meeting the competencies.

Organization of This Paper

The next section of this paper summarizes the processes and procedures states have followed in developing statewide learner competency and assessment systems, the content of the competencies and instructional curriculum, learner assessments, and learner recognition efforts. In the final section of the paper we discuss the lessons learned from these states' experiences that are relevant for other states. Appendix A summarizes, on a state by state basis, the activities undertaken by each of the 11 states. Appendix B provides sample state competencies and examples of learner recognition activities or certificates.

AN ANALYSIS OF STATEWIDE LEARNER COMPETENCY AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Drawing on the information obtained through telephone interviews with state staff and a review of materials that they provided, we have developed a descriptive framework that delineates the development process. Figure 1 presents components of this process:

- A systematic and informed process through which competencies have been determined.

Table 1 shows the status of statewide learner competency and assessment systems using this framework. Statewide systems are currently operating in seven of the 11 states we contacted: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Oregon and Washington. In four of these states (with Delaware, Florida, and Georgia being the exceptions) the competencies are drawn from CASAS and often have an employment orientation influenced by the work of SCANS. While five of these states have developed a curriculum or framework related to the competencies, local programs usually are not required to use the curriculum. Three of the states — Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon — require local programs to use a specific assessment instrument. Four states have established statewide procedures for recognizing when learners achieve their competencies.

Four states — Iowa, Kentucky, Texas, and West Virginia — are in varying stages of developing statewide learner competency and assessment systems. Iowa is developing learner competencies based on CASAS. West Virginia competencies are based on SCANS and ASTD's *Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want*. There appears to be interest by at least two of these states — Kentucky and West Virginia — in developing a statewide curriculum to accompany the competencies.

In the remainder of this section, activities undertaken by the 11 states in developing a statewide learner competency and assessment system are described for each of the four components mentioned above: (1) a systematic process for developing the competencies; (2) a curriculum package directly related to the competencies; (3) appropriate assessment instruments; and (4) procedures for recognizing learner achievement of competencies.

stakeholders in order for the competencies that are identified to have the legitimacy necessary for them to be accepted by service providers and learners.

Process and Procedures for Establishing Competencies

Most states we contacted have developed learner competencies through interagency task forces that have included representatives from adult education, JOBS, JTPA, and often offices of employment security, and social services. Many, if not all, of these activities have been supported through the special projects provisions of Section 353 of the Adult Education Act. The competencies and curricula have often been subjected to a pilot testing process at several local adult education programs before being implemented on a statewide basis.

Following are brief descriptions of the processes and procedures for establishing competencies followed in the 11 states. More detailed summaries are presented in Appendix A.

Colorado: Competencies selected by a task force comprised primarily of adult education instructors which met over an 18 month period. The competencies were then field-tested at 11 pilot sites for one year. Ten adult education programs worked with JTPA providers to examine the use of certificates of accomplishment and the processes for verifying that competencies had been attained. ESL competencies were developed and field tested in 1993-95.

Connecticut: The Connecticut Departments of Education, Labor, and Social Services have jointly implemented a statewide competency-based assessment and basic skills remediation program called the Connecticut Competency System.

Delaware: Statewide competencies have been established for ABE and ASE through a grassroots effort to develop a skills certification process. After a group of adult education instructors and program administrators identified a set of skills thought to be needed by adult students, specific competencies were developed by the state's Interagency Council on Adult Literacy, which included representatives from health and social services agencies, private industry councils, JTPA, JOBS, corrections, and employers. Certificates of Educational Attainment (CEA) were field tested at three program sites, with staff at these sites receiving training and technical assistance in implementing the CEA process.

Florida: Statewide competencies have been in place in Florida since the early 1980s. They were developed in response to the state's interest in promoting accountability and a functional approach to the delivery of human services. A Florida Adult Literacy Policy

Washington: Implementation of the Washington State Core Competencies Project took place over a five year period. During the project's first phase, competencies, subject areas, and levels for ABE, ESL, and GED programs were identified. A model curriculum was developed during the project's second phase. In 1995, the Core Competencies were expanded to include workplace skills. Input for the development of the competencies and statewide curriculum was provided by an interagency steering committee consisting of representatives from state education and employment-related agencies, including JTPA, the Board of Education, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the state Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Employment Security Department, JOBS, and the Department of Education. The competencies were field tested and training was provided to pilot sites. Subsequently, assessment tools for the competencies were field tested.

West Virginia: The state is in the process of developing a statewide system of learner competencies that are designed to serve the adult learner as a worker, parent, and citizen. The goal of the program is to provide adult learners with a broad range of skills that are valued in the workplace while also helping them to meet their specific learning goals. During the summer of 1996, West Virginia plans to familiarize instructors with competency-based education at the state conference and, in the summer of 1997, the state plans to provide full-time adult education and JOBS instructors with a week-long training institute on the entire curriculum.

Content of Competencies

Employment related basic skills is a common theme of the learner competencies developed or under development in these states. In the following six states, the skills and competencies are based on CASAS life skills and employability competencies or influenced by SCANS.

Colorado: The state has developed statewide competencies in basic skills and life skills related to: basic skills/functions, community services, consumer economics, employment, health, housing, transportation/directions.

Connecticut: Connecticut's competencies were originally drawn from CASAS competencies and later prioritized by adult education instructors according to instructional importance. Competencies are outlined for ABE and ESL participants in a Priority Competency List for Adult Basic Education that includes consumer economics, community resources, employment, health, government and law, computation, and learning to learn.

Iowa: Eleven top priority competencies have been identified: communication in general interpersonal interactions, communication in the workplace, communication regarding personal information, working with people, ability to use thinking skills, basic principles

In three states — Delaware, Georgia, and in Texas for ABE — learner competencies are based on academic skills and not functional competencies. Florida's student performance standards are divided into two separate tracks — one for basic skills (e.g., reading, language arts, mathematics, science) and one for functional skills such as consumer resources, health/wellness, and career development.

A Curriculum Package Related to Competencies

Instruction at adult education programs has rarely been guided by a formal curriculum package and, for the most part, states have traditionally not been involved with specifying the instructional materials to be used by local programs. With the development and implementation of learner competencies, this situation appears to be changing, at least in many of the states we contacted. Once a state has taken the step toward specifying learner competencies for adult students, they are likely to then develop a cohesive curriculum package that will support instruction directly related to those competencies.

Seven of the 11 states contacted — Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Oregon, Texas and Washington — have established statewide curricula or curriculum guides that are related to learner competencies. West Virginia is currently in the process of developing such curricula. Three states — Connecticut, Delaware, and Iowa — have not developed state curriculum related to their learner competencies.

Although most of the 11 states have or are developing state curriculum to accompany the learner competencies, these are typically models or suggestions. Georgia is the only one of the 11 states to have developed a curriculum that local programs are required to follow. Most of the remaining states have either developed curriculum or curriculum guides for use by local programs.

States with Required Curricula

Georgia: A statewide curriculum guide provides recommended resources for each competency area and an optional student competency check list for instructors to use in documenting learner progress.

All of the 11 states contacted collect standardized test data from local programs. Recognizing the limitations of standardized assessments, some states are also beginning to consider alternative assessments, and to require learner portfolios, as part of their assessment system.

Standardized Assessments

Three of the seven states in which a statewide learner competency and assessment system is currently operating — Connecticut, Georgia, and Oregon — require local programs to use a specific assessment instrument, although other assessment instruments are also used by local programs.

Connecticut: Local programs are required to report on student gains using the CASAS, although some programs continue to provide supplemental reports using such measures as the TABE and SORT.

Georgia: Local programs are required to use the TABE and ABLE for ABE students and the BEST and ESLOA for ESL students.

Oregon: For ABE the state uses the CASAS pre-and post-tests and applied performance measures. For ESL, the short form of the BEST is used for placement. A common writing assessment also is used. Student performance levels (SPL) are used to benchmark progress.

Kentucky and West Virginia, whose learner competency and assessment systems are under development, also have selected a specific assessment instrument (TABE in Kentucky and CASAS in West Virginia). Six states have not attempted to require that local programs use a single assessment instrument and these states report that local programs use a variety of assessments.

Colorado: Primary assessment instruments are CASAS and TABE.

Delaware: Delaware does not require a specific assessment instrument. Skills are verified through attainment of a minimum score on one of five possible instruments: TABE, ABLE, Learning Unlimited, and program completion through Literacy Volunteers or Laubach Literacy Action.

Learner Recognition

Accompanying the movement toward specifying learner competencies for adult education students has been the establishment of procedures and processes for recognizing learner progress or completion of specific competencies. Four of the states where statewide learner competencies have been developed — Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, and Oregon — have also established statewide procedures for recognizing learners who have achieved those competencies. In Connecticut, Florida, and Washington, local programs are responsible for determining what recognition should be provided for adult learners.

Procedures for recognizing learners that have achieved certain competencies also exist or are planned in all of the states where learner competency and assessment systems are under development — Iowa, Kentucky, Texas, and West Virginia. In Kentucky, local programs have discretion over the award of certificates.

Following are descriptions of learner recognition systems:

Colorado: When learners have attained all of the proficiencies required for each level, they are eligible to receive a Colorado Certificate of Accomplishment. Local program directors must submit an application to the state, including the learner's test score, portfolio, mastery of textbook material, and demonstration of competencies. Colorado's certificate process is modeled after the Delaware process.

Delaware: Certificates of Educational Attainment (CEAs) are issued by the State Department of Public Instruction and awarded by local programs to students upon attainment at each of three competency levels. CEAs are used by local programs to certify student outcomes, to recognize student achievement, verify JTPA termination points, and meet JOBS goal targets. They are also used by adult learners as a documentation for employment, achievement in the workplace entry into training programs, continuation of government services, and personal development.

Georgia: A structured, statewide student award process enables adult education participants to compete for awards in any of seven categories representing ABE, ESL, and GED program levels. Nominated students are expected to submit to the state Office of Adult Literacy a biography, three letters of recommendation, and a signed release form. Competition for state awards occurs at the county level, SDA level, "consortium" level, and state level. Declared winners in each category are designated "Ambassadors for Literacy" and may serve as literacy spokespersons around the state. The state encourages graduation ceremonies, but these are established at the local level.

When involving practitioners not associated with adult education, it is also important to recognize and acknowledge that for such a system to be successful, all service providers will have to view this as a collective effort and one that requires development of a common culture, set of values, and program terminology. This is particularly important as human service agencies become more outcome based, and in preparation for potential funding cuts and shifts to block grant funding.

Recognize That Developing and Implementing a System Will Take Time

Designing and implementing a learner competency and assessment system is a complex undertaking that involves substantial changes in the way adult education instruction is provided, its content, as well as procedures for assessment. Successfully developing a new system requires a state to evaluate and assess how its statewide adult education program is operating. Sufficient time also needs to be devoted to field testing competency systems in local programs so that potential bugs can be worked out and instructors develop an understanding of the competencies and assessment. Also, it is essential to acknowledge that developing and implementing a learner competency and assessment system is a continuous process where "nothing is ever done."

Provide Local Staff with Sufficient Professional Development Activities

Implementing a learner competency and assessment system often requires local programs to provide instruction in a very different manner from traditional approaches, focusing on specific competencies that they want learners to achieve, and using different curricula and assessment instruments. Instructors, particularly part-time staff and volunteers, for example, may be reluctant to follow different assessment procedures and may need assistance in becoming familiar with the relationship between learner competencies, curriculum, and assessment measures. Instructors and administrators will need to be involved with sufficient and appropriate professional development activities if the system is to operate as intended. Such activities may include on-site training, regional training, or technical assistance.

APPENDIX A

State Summaries

COLORADO

Overview

Development of statewide competencies for adult education took place over a two-year period between 1991-93. A field task force comprised largely of adult education teachers selected the competencies, meeting over an 18-month period. These competencies were also field tested at 11 pilot sites for one year. Ten adult education programs worked with JTPA providers to examine the use of certificates of accomplishment and the process for verifying attainment of competencies. Competencies for ESL were developed in 1993-95 through a similar process.

The Department of Education offers a multi-layered rationale for development of the competencies:

- Means for accountability;
- Documentation of skill acquisition;
- Recognition of learner accomplishments;
- Provision of a consistent statewide framework;
- Means of reporting progress; and
- Impetus from the national standards movement and school reform in K-12.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Statewide competencies in basic skills and life skills for ABE (reading, writing, and mathematics) are detailed in a state *Curriculum Guidebook* that is linked with the *Colorado Certificate of Accomplishment*, now in its third year of implementation. Competencies are delineated in *Skills Verification Checklists* for each of three skill levels. The competencies and verification package for ESL were developed through a similar process and disseminated to the field in 1994-95.

Certificates are numbered and printed in different colors to indicate level differences. For ABE, Level 1 is green; Level 2 is blue; and Level 3 is gold. ESL certificates use different colors: Level 1 is brown; Level 2 is red; and Level 3 is green.

All award ceremonies are determined by local programs. State office staff attend as many graduation ceremonies as time and schedules permit. This certificate and award process was modeled after Delaware's program.

Assessment Instruments

The primary assessment measures are CASAS and TABE for ABE students, and BEST and CASAS for ESL students. Competencies are taken from the CASAS topic areas of occupational knowledge, health, consumer economics, community resources, and government and law. Additional topic areas used in ESL are basic skills (language functions), community services, employment, housing, and transportation and directions. Attainment of skills is also documented through three other sources: (1) a portfolio of documented course work, (2) mastery of textbook material demonstrating skill attainment, and (3) demonstration of competencies. Skills Verification Checklists for each level specify the CASAS, BEST, or TABE test item corresponding to each competency. For each skill or group of skills, the Curriculum Guidebook cross references related competencies and provides recommended lessons from textbooks and suggested activities toward mastering the competency.

State and Local Impact

Support letters from employers around the state affirm that the certificates are being used to verify skill levels for non-high school graduates and to explore skill areas for education and training. The state adult education division also reports that programs can work toward consistent instructional goals and student outcomes while maintaining flexible methods of instruction and materials.

Assessment Instruments

Local programs are required to report on student gains using CASAS-developed assessment instruments, although some programs continue to provide supplemental reports using measures such as the TABE and SORT. The CASAS is used for initial appraisal to determine program placement, interim assessments to measure student gains (pre- and post-tests), and final assessments (certification and/or level tests).

Challenges/Lessons Learned

In developing a statewide competency system, Connecticut faced and addressed a number of challenges. These included: (1) developing a data management system that collected data about individual learner progress; (2) offering sufficient training to staff and technical assistance to local programs; and (3) promoting continuing interagency cooperation between the Departments of Education, Labor and Income Maintenance.

A key component of the CAPP approach was staff development. The Connecticut Adult Education Staff Development Center (now the Adult Training and Development Network) trained local program staff in the implementation of the CAPP model and provided ongoing technical assistance.

State and Local Impact

Between 1986 and 1991, the number of learners reporting that they had achieved their goals through participation in adult education more than doubled. Additionally, the number of adult learners participating in the assessment process grew significantly during that time and learners' average scores on assessment instruments remained constant, in spite of the increasing numbers of participants.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Statewide competencies have been established for ABE and adult secondary education levels in reading, writing, and mathematics for adults and out-of-school youth who lack a high school credential. Adult education students are given formal recognition and support for their educational accomplishments through the Delaware Certificates of Educational Attainment (CEA), which are issued by the Department of Public Instruction and awarded at the local program level.

State certificates are issued to individuals for three levels of educational attainment in reading, mathematics, and writing. Level 1 corresponds to completion of the 4th grade; Level 2 corresponds to completion of the 8th grade, and Level 3 is equivalent to completion of high school skills in the areas of math, reading, writing, social studies, and science. To achieve a CEA for Level 1, students must score a minimum of 5.0 on one of the following:

- TABE Test (Level M — problem solving and computation)
- ABLE Test (Level 2)
- Learning Unlimited (Level B in Math, Level C in Reading)
- Literacy Volunteers Program Completion
- Laubach Literacy Action Program Completion

To receive a CEA for Level 2, students must score a minimum of 8.0 on one of the following:

- TABE Test (Level D)
- ABLE Test (Level 3)
- Learning Unlimited (Level D in Math, Level E in Reading)

For Level 3, students must complete either of the following two requirements: (1) Method I: pass the four-hour GED Practice Test with a minimum total standard score of 240 and no subtest under 45; and write two content samples, one in social studies and one in science

level) and how to teach to it and score it. Much training was needed to familiarize teachers with the competencies and link them to different assessment measures. Despite training, many of the initial applications for CEAs had to be sent back because they were not properly understood or documented.

Another difficulty was in changing aspects of the system in the middle of the implementation process. This can make for a difficult adjustment among the stakeholders involved. For example, the initial name chosen for the CEA was "Basic Skills Certification"; this was changed, however, because of negative connotations associated with it. In addition, some assessment categories had to be removed (e.g., problem solving), because they were too difficult to assess and document.

State and Local Impact

As a result of the implementation of the skills certification process, anecdotal evidence from adult educators and students has shown that the number of student contact hours has increased and program staff have found that they are better able to document student basic skills growth and program completion. Writing quantity and quality has improved noticeably from what was observed from samples taken during the pilot tests, as this is a requirement of all three levels of the CEA. In addition, teachers have shown that they now have a more uniform understanding of what the levels mean, and what an individual must do when a person completes a level. This is evidenced in the fact that, during the pilot and initial implementation of the competencies, the SRT frequently had to return applications to programs because they were not properly documented; currently, the SRT rarely has to return an application to a program.

One unexpected outcome the state has experienced is an increase of students, particularly those at the CEA Level 3, moving on to the high school diploma program, and a decrease in students seeking the GED credential. Students who dropped out of high school in the 11th or 12th grades, especially, are demonstrating a willingness to take the time to work toward a high school diploma rather than obtaining a GED credential. In addition, employers that have established workplace education programs in diverse industries such as poultry, manufacturing,

FLORIDA

Overview

The state of Florida has had statewide adult education competencies in place since the early 1980s. Among the factors influencing the development of statewide competencies was the state's interest in program accountability and a functional approach across human service programs, school reform efforts, and a desire for adult basic education to adhere to the state's K-12 standards.

Over the past decade, 353 funds have been used to support projects in which adult education teachers write and update curricula for a competency-based approach, and identify appropriate materials to be used to teach to the competencies.

Competencies and Their Assessment

The student performance standards are grouped into two tracks: functional skills and basic skills. The **basic skills track** includes standards for reading (e.g., demonstrate appropriate skills for obtaining information, recognize sounds and their association with letters, demonstrate inferential comprehension skills), language arts (e.g., compose grammatically correct sentences, write a paragraph expressing ideas clearly), mathematics, science (e.g., basic life science, physical science, earth/space science), health, social sciences, and consumer education. The **functional skills track** includes standards for consumer economics, community resources (e.g., use the telephone and telephone book, use community agencies and services), health/wellness (e.g., understand diet, exercise, stress management, use of medications), career development, government and law, family literacy, comprehension skills on practical living skills, document literacy, arithmetic skills on practical living skills, personal care skills, and social skills.

Curriculum

In 1993, Orange County developed a functional skills curriculum framework that is used widely around the state. The Division of Applied Technology and Adult Education has published *Curriculum Frameworks and Student Performance Standards for Adult General Education.*

GEORGIA

Overview

Georgia developed a structured competency-based system that is tied closely to a traditional grade-level system. Efforts to that end began in 1990, when a Task Force on Assessment and Evaluation was established to analyze the state's assessment and evaluation process and to provide a more systematic approach to assessment. The task force included the following: state's adult literacy directors (from public and private programs), university professors, instructors, and representatives from the Office of Adult Literacy.

In the process of developing a statewide curriculum, the task force solicited input from other states who had embarked on similar projects and examined existing vendor products. The state's adult literacy directors conducted several reviews of the draft curriculum before it was finalized. After the curriculum was finalized, training was provided to all adult literacy directors and teachers. The entire process of identifying competencies, developing a curriculum, and conducting staff development activities took approximately one year.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Statewide competencies are tied in with a statewide curriculum that is organized into three general competency areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Competencies are grouped into three levels for ABE and three for ESL, in addition to the adult secondary or GED level.

ABE/ESL levels include:

- Level I (grades 0-4.9);
- Level II (Level II-A = grades 5-6.9; Level II-B = grades 7-8.9); and
- Level III (grades 9-12).

tend to support what they help create." In addition, states should include an aggressive, organized marketing plan tailored to the state's needs, and should follow Federal guidelines and suggestions.

State and Local Impact

The state reports that its adult education program has witnessed a variety of benefits since instituting a statewide competency system:

- Classes can be organized in a specific manner.
- Student achievement levels can be tracked by student and teacher.
- Assessment has been standardized.
- The system assists in establishing student goals. Success is defined individually and provides more ownership for the learner.
- Recruitment and retention of students has improved due to more clearly defined goals.
- The number of GED graduates has increased significantly.
- Public awareness and credibility of the GED credential has improved.

- communicate in general interpersonal interactions;
- communicate effectively in the workplace;
- communicate regarding personal information;
- demonstrate effectiveness in working with people;
- demonstrate ability to use thinking skills;
- understand basic principles of getting a job;
- use problem solving skills;
- use language of clarification;
- compute using whole numbers;
- understand job performance concepts and materials; and
- practice organizational and time management skills.

Assessment Instruments

CASAS is the primary assessment measure that is recommended for use with the identified competencies; however, programs also use the TABE and ABLE for reporting purposes, as well as a variety of other standardized and informal measures such as the WRAT, SORT, personal observations, oral presentations, role playing, writing assessment, video feedback, and life simulation scenarios. In consultation with CASAS staff, Iowa is developing its own norming and customized assessment instruments.

Competencies are grouped according to the CASAS levels. The state office plans to create a system to document attainment of competencies and award certificates of completion.

Challenges/Lessons Learned

Iowa cautions states who plan to modify their existing adult education systems not to assume that the entire system needs an overhaul. Instead, they recommend that states systematically and honestly evaluate the current functioning of their system to identify areas in which the programs excel and areas that would benefit from change. Other lessons learned during the process of identifying the priority competencies included: (1) recognizing that the change process is long term and having a long-range plan to accomplish goals; and (2) basing change on research, including knowledge about learner needs and accomplishments.

- home management,
- family relationships,
- interpersonal/social skills,
- self-management skills,
- employability and occupational skills,
- communication skills,
- thinking skills,
- social sciences,
- government/citizenship,
- cultural diversity, and
- community resources.

Each duty area is divided into three levels of instruction: beginning ABE, intermediate ABE, and adult secondary education (pre-GED).

Curriculum

Competencies for ABE and ESL are linked to a statewide curriculum. For each competency or a group of related competencies, the curriculum guide lists related skills, prerequisites, progress benchmarks, relevant terminology, and "reflections" of the use of a competency or skill in everyday life. Sample learning activities include benchmark tasks (e.g., using a calculator to reconcile a bank statement); listing basic content areas under those tasks (e.g., comparing check stubs with bank statement and canceled checks; identifying outstanding checks; verifying deposits); and listing resources that may be used (e.g., lessons from commercial texts or real-life materials).

Assessment Instruments

The assessment plan calls for both formal and informal measures. The formal assessment component, the TABE, is required for all program sites. The informal assessment component is optional; it includes a menu of options from which teachers may choose measures appropriate to instruction. These options include performance assessment items and portfolio work (e.g., unit or

OREGON

Overview

Through an interagency consortium, Oregon has developed a competency-based set of competencies and accompanying curriculum for adult basic skills instruction. In addition to ABE and ESL programs, other providers of basic skills instruction utilize the competency-based system, including JOBS programs, alternative schools, dislocated worker programs, vocational technical education programs, correctional education, and JTPA. Based on task force meetings and long-range planning efforts from more than a decade ago, the state has been committed to finding ways to move disadvantaged adults from dependency to self-sufficiency and to accomplish this without duplicating efforts across human service agencies. These agencies conduct ongoing joint planning, seeking ways to link employability and education efforts while looking at program participants as "whole people."

In 1994, focus groups were convened to suggest ways to develop standardized accountability measures that communicate what students accomplish in education/job readiness programs. Focus group participants included volunteer tutors and representatives from community colleges, alternative education, skill centers, Even Start, JTPA, and dislocated worker programs. The focus groups concluded that they need benchmarks, some indicators that let them know that they are moving up in the system.

Competencies and Their Assessment

The Oregon Competency Based Steering Committee developed and field tested a competency-based functional life skills curriculum in ABE and ESL programs around the state. The multi-agency committee consisted of representatives from community colleges, correctional institutions, JTPA, state economic development and employment departments, professional technical education, and JOBS programs. The curriculum and accompanying competencies were field tested by 18 teachers at eight pilot sites during 1988-90. Intensive training on the competencies was provided. In addition, quarterly meetings are held to share, recommend changes, and define implementation strategies.

(1) *Extremely limited* — based on a score of under 225 on the BASIS reading or math test and Level 1-2 on a 6-point writing test. Represents low literacy skills and extremely limited employment options (e.g., would be able to read a simple menu or fill out a simple form but would have difficulty reconciling a bank statement or calculating gas mileage).

(2) *Limited* — based on a score of 225-235 on the BASIS test, and Level 2-3 on the writing test. Represents an ability to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks and qualification for entry-level employment (e.g., can reconcile a bank statement and interpret a payroll stub but would have difficulty maintaining a family budget or writing an accident or incident report).

(3) *Average* — based on a score of 236-256 on the BASIS test and Level 3-4 on the writing appraisal. Represents good basic skills and the likelihood of entering employment that has some degree of complexity (e.g., able to create and use tables and graphs or communicate personal opinion in written form, but would have difficulty understanding college textbooks or highly technical manuals).

(4) *Above average* — these individuals generally have education beyond high school, perhaps a two- or four-year degree.

(5) *Target mobility* — these individuals have substantial education beyond high school, are proficient in using computers and other technological aids, and highly skilled at career development.

The Mobility Continuum allows partnering agencies to identify and target services designed to move Oregonians along a lifelong learning design for services. Student portfolios include certification received at the different levels in different subject areas.

Assessment Instruments

The first time the state selected a common assessment instrument was in 1987 during pilot programs for welfare. For ABE, the state uses the CASAS pre- and post-tests and applied performance measures. For ESL, the short form of the BEST is used for placement, and student performance levels (SPL) are used to benchmark progress. Workplace literacy programs use BASIS for placement, a workforce checklist, and *Workplace Basics* measures such as simulations, applied performance, and group demonstrations. CASAS content areas are used to prioritize large areas for course content. Information from test content guides some of the "how-to's" for teaching (e.g., the need to include graphs and charts). CASAS pre- and post-test scores are not

Based on early JOBS pilots in the late 1980s, adult education programs and other providers determined that they could not approach delivery of services with the assumption that students are self-managed. They also found that programs need to devote time up front with learners to stop the "revolving door." As a result, adult education and partner agencies have focused on extensive orientation and classes in time management, goal setting, and planning to help learners understand their own skills and abilities.

State and Local Impact

As a result of implementing a competency-based system, program delivery is much different from traditional models, and the state reports broad and marked improvements in program and student outcomes since 1990. The traditional open-entry, open-exit delivery system has been replaced by a "managed opportunities" approach, which strives to conduct regular intake and orientation, with the goal of matching access with other tools and planning needed for student goals and success. Now, programs provide a mix of classroom instructional approaches, with an emphasis on group work and virtual elimination of workbooks and manuals.

Local programs are better able to show how participants move through the system and how the delivery system impacts retention rates. Customer satisfaction samples (student focus groups) also support the effectiveness of a competency-based system. Continuity in the system has been maintained through a variety of political environments as stakeholders at all levels remain committed to seeing the statewide system continue.

Plans for the Future

Oregon's primary goal is to continue the variety of activities — training, technical assistance, teachers-as-leaders curriculum committees, targeted 353 projects, intensive cooperative learning implementation and other interagency projects — that support a dynamic, outcome-based basic skill development system. Integration into a total service plan across agencies also is expected to fit well with integrated block grant planning in the future. Oregon is moving to an automated accountability system for adult education, and is continuing to develop checklists for volunteer tutors, as well.

areas for the next level, approximately grades 5-8, are similar to the GED Test topics of reading, writing, math, social studies, and science.

IPQs are not separated into functional levels; however, the old learner outcomes were divided into sequential levels. ESL outcomes are broken down into five levels: Level 0: pre-literate; Level 1: beginning; Level 2: intermediate; Level 3: intermediate; and Level 4: advanced. ABE learner outcomes were initially divided into three standard levels corresponding with traditional literacy levels of 0-4, 5-8, and 9-12, but with the emphasis on portfolio assessment and potential programmatic changes at the Federal level, these levels are not expected to be relevant. Learner outcomes delineated on skills checklists have been integrated into a matrix that shows the relevant levels and competencies for each indicator. For example, ESL learner outcomes, depending on the indicator and competency area, may be included on several or all five levels for each indicator. These IPQs are categorized as follows:

- Academic development: Levels 0-4;
- Real world application: Levels 0-4;
- Transition: Levels 3-4;
- Work force: Levels 0-4; and
- Personal development: Levels 2-4.

Assessment Instruments

The state is now promoting portfolio assessment and is shying away from individual standardized assessment instruments to measure learner progress. In keeping with this approach, the skills checklists adapted from the learner outcomes allow the instructor to note whether a student's performance was evaluated through teacher observation, oral response, a written test, or other method. Texas also is beginning to move away from using an outcomes checklist or tying an outcome to a particular text; instead, the emphasis is more on use of real-life materials.

Local programs determine what materials go into a portfolio. Programs must have dated samples and a goals list in these portfolios. Teachers may use standardized tests or observations;

Plans for the Future

Depending on the scope and direction of legislative changes, the indicators may change. Some ABE administrators are concerned that if funding for staff development is cut or removed, teachers will not have access to the latest research and best practices. Others are concerned that revised legislation may move adult education to more of a traditional focus on reading.

The state adult education office is expressing an interest in a performance measurement assessment system similar to what the Texas Employment Commission has instituted for its participants. Under this system, portfolio assessment is to be based on performance measures. In addition, the state is attempting to integrate more SCANS skills into the curriculum guides.

In 1995, the Core Competencies were reviewed and revised following a survey of providers, and the system was expanded to incorporate workplace skills competencies from the state's I*CANS Project. One rationale behind the revision was to encourage basic skills programs to contextualize their instruction, which many programs already were beginning to do. Revisions to the Core Competencies were made by simplifying the language, removing duplication, and identifying competencies that were not being used. With these revisions and an eye toward a more integrated instructional delivery system, the state wants to refer to the competencies as "student competencies" rather than "Core" or I*CANS. Individuals involved in the revision process represented ABE programs, correctional education, Private Industry Councils, employment security, social and health services, and local literacy councils.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Competencies are divided into several skill areas, including basic skills (i.e., reading, writing, computation), and interpersonal and problem-solving skills (formerly the I*CANS skills: learning to learn, thinking skills, personal management, group effectiveness, communication, and organizational influence). Basic skills are divided into three levels for ABE and three levels for ESL. The interpersonal and problem-solving skills are not leveled; rather, they are integrated into instruction at each academic level, as appropriate. Broad Basic Skills Competency Indicators are used to explain to providers and users of basic skills services what competencies students have when they complete a level in ABE or ESL. They are used to provide consistency in making decisions about adult learner placement, progress, and completion.

The Workplace Basics Project's 22 competencies were validated with more than 400 representatives from business, educators, government employees, and job trainers. Each competency area describes the objective, domain specification, model test item, and eligible test content that are appropriate to that competency area. Pilot tests were conducted at about 20 program sites.

education) to understand what each level means with regard to a learner's progress. The Office of Adult Literacy has distributed the competency indicators widely to partner agencies. The competencies also provide a framework for local program curriculum development.

Plans for the Future

Development of state competencies is seen as work in progress. A statewide assessment working group of partner agencies is looking for an assessment system that might work across providers and is exploring ways that the different agencies may share results on their clients. At present, it is unclear if the TABE will continue to be the primary instrument for ABE programs.

Program improvement was the primary motivation behind the development of the statewide system of learner competencies, although accountability to the legislature and to businesses also played a role. During the initial planning, there was an awareness that future legislative changes would demand greater attention to work-related skills.

Competencies and Their Assessment

Over the past year, West Virginia has begun developing skill areas, competencies, and learning objectives in three areas — work-based, parenting, and citizenship curriculum tracks. These tracks reflect the current needs of the adult learners participating in the state's adult education programs.

Core skills in the work-based curriculum include: communications, math, thinking and learning, team building, technology, personal management, multi-cultural awareness, career development, and wellness and safety. Core skills in the parenting and citizenship curricula include: family relationships and parenting skills, home care, and law and citizenship. West Virginia is still in the process of fine-tuning the list of skills and competencies; objectives are nearly completed for each competency in three functioning levels: beginning (0-5 grade level), intermediate (6-8 grade level), and advanced (9-12 grade level).

Curriculum

The system of adult learner competencies described in this summary will be a part of the statewide curriculum being developed for adult education programs in West Virginia.

Assessment Instruments

West Virginia plans to adapt the CASAS for use in assessment. The state also plans to issue certificates of mastery as learners achieve specified levels of functioning.

Challenges/Lessons Learned

A major challenge anticipated by West Virginia is successfully focusing on both general work-place skills (e.g., communication) and specific learner objectives (e.g., obtaining a GED credential). They anticipate difficulty convincing teachers and adult learners the value of looking

SAMPLE COMPETENCIES FOR:

- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- West Virginia

APPENDIX B

- Sample Competencies
- Sample Learner Recognition Activities/Certificates

CERTIFICATE OF ACCO .ISHMENT—LEVEL 3

These skills are verified by two or more assessments approved by the State Library and Adult Education Office. At the time of issuance, competencies and basic skills are demonstrated at 8.9 grade level.

Reading Life Skills

Identify and use sources of information about job opportunities
Interpret job applications, resumes and letters of application
Recognize standards of behavior, appropriate questions and responses for job interviews
Interpret wages, wage deductions and benefits
Interpret job-related policy and procedures manuals

Use maps relating to travel needs
Interpret information from newspapers, periodicals, business letters, pamphlets and brochures

Compare methods of purchasing goods and services
Interpret advertisements, labels or charts to select goods and services
Interpret nutritional and related information listed on food labels

Recognize problems related to drugs, tobacco and alcohol and where treatment may be obtained
Locate agencies providing emergency help and interpret how to effectively use them

Interpret classified ads and other information to locate housing
Interpret information about rights of renters and landlords

Identify regulations and procedures to obtain a driver's license or picture ID
Interpret information about automobile insurance
Interpret information related to automobile maintenance

Interpret information about local community policy-making groups
Interpret information about world political systems
Interpret information about voter qualifications, polls and registration procedures

Writing Skills

Write a resume and letter of application
Write 3 business letters (request, complaint, informational)
Place an ad in a newspaper to sell an item or advertise services

Fill out a health insurance claim form
Fill out an accident report form

Fill out an application for a driver's license
Fill out postal forms (send package overseas, application for a post office box)

Mathematics Life Skills

Compute work time
Compute wages and deductions
Complete income tax forms (short form)

Interpret basic budgets
Calculate home maintenance and rental costs

Compute sales tax
Compute discounts and rebates
Compute unit pricing
Compare price and quality to determine best buys
Compute measurement—thickness, width, height, perimeter, area (square feet), volume (cubic feet)
Interpret maps and compute mileage and speed
Compute gasoline cost and consumption
Interpret scale: weight and temperature
Interpret International Metric System of measurement

Basic Skills

Compute percents, rate, ratio or proportion
Make charts relating two variables
Makes graphs (bar, line and circle)
From reading a passage:
- Determine author purpose and style
- Interpret point of view and bias
- Interpret fact/opinion and real/fanciful
- Draw conclusions and make predictions
- Follow detailed instructions

Write compositions—persuasive, descriptive, personal view point, factual reporting

Use self-correction techniques for spelling, punctuation, and grammar usage
Identify parts of a sentence and paragraph (subject, predicate, phrase, topic sentence, conclusion etc.)
Recognize and use standard English grammar (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, objects, superlatives, comparatives)

Identify problems and offer several strategies for solutions
Prepare a critique and an argument regarding a reading passage

CONNECTICUT COMPETENCY SYSTEM

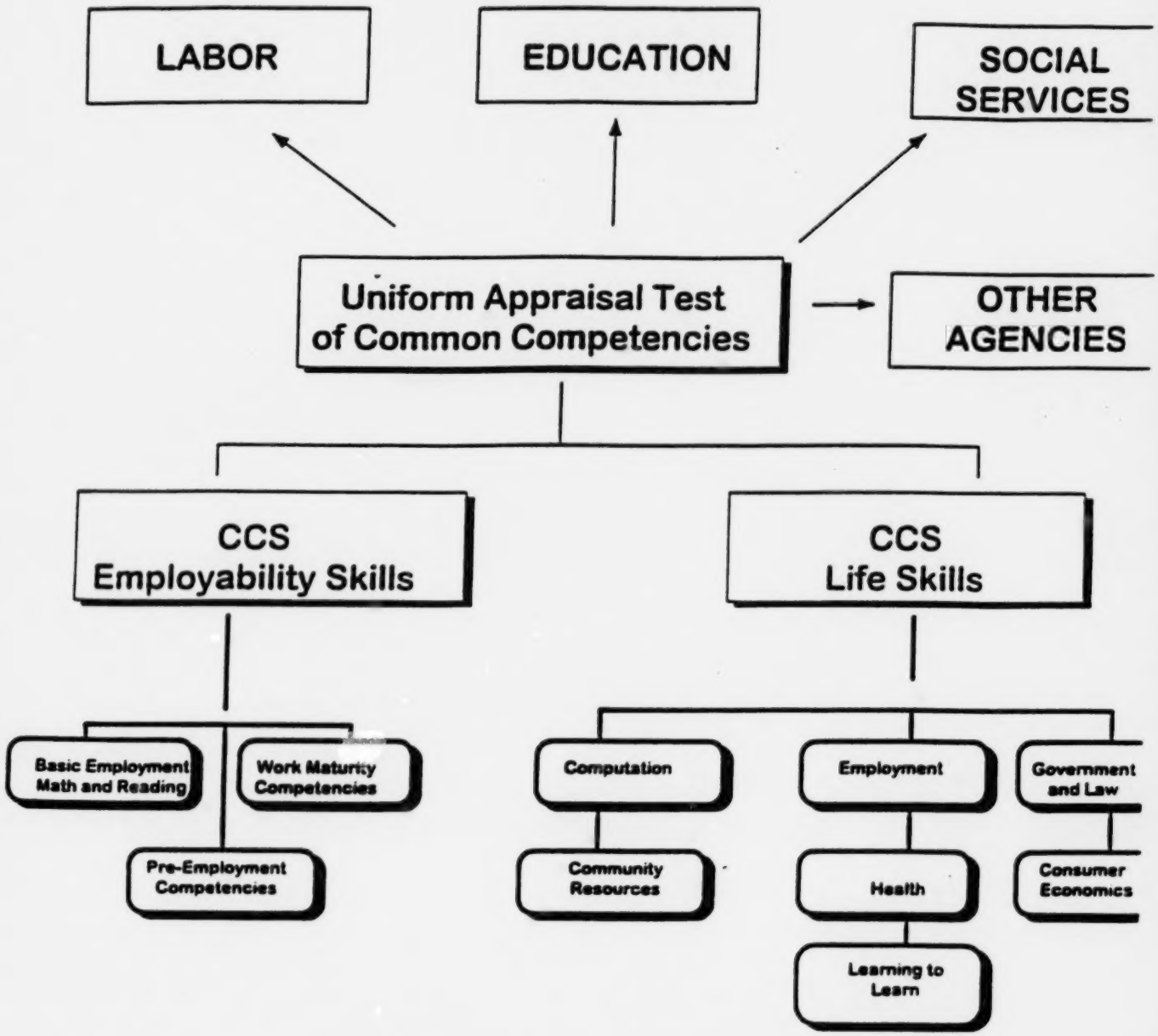

Table 4
Most Essential Skills: Aggregate IABSS Respondent Ratings (Top & High Priority Levels)

	Rating	Competency	CASAS Competency Area: Basic Communication	Learning to Learn	Environment	Health	Consumer Economics	Community Resources	Computation	Gov't & Law
		Top Priority Level								
1.	3.66	Communicate in general interpersonal interactions	•							
2.	3.55	Communicate effectively in the workplace			•					
3.	3.50	Communicate regarding personal information	•							
4.	3.49	Demonstrate effectiveness in working with people			•					
5.	3.47	Demonstrate ability to use thinking skills		•						
6.	3.44	Understand basic principles of getting a job			•					
7.	3.44	Use problem solving skills		•						
8.	3.40	Use language of clarification	•							
9.	3.38	Compute using whole numbers							•	
10.	3.36	Understand job performance concepts & materials			•					
11.	3.31	Practice organizational & time management skills		•						
		High Priority Level								
12.	3.30	Use the telephone and telephone book						•		
13.	3.27	Understand (workplace) safety procedures			•					
14.	3.27	Understand basic health and safety procedures				•				
15.	3.25	Use weights, measurement scales, and money					•			
16.	3.19	Understand wages, benefits, and employ. concepts			•					
17.	3.16	Apply principles of budgeting					•			
18.	3.13	Understand ailments and seek medical assistance				•				
19.	3.10	Understand principles of health maintenance				•				
20.	3.10	Understand aspects of personal management		•						
21.	3.05	Utilize common workplace technology			•					
22.	3.04	Effectively manage workplace resources			•					
23.	3.03	Compute using decimals							•	
24.	3.01	Understand how to select and use medications				•				
25.	2.98	Demonstrate study skills		•						
26.	2.96	Understand individual rights and responsibilities								•
27.	2.94	Understand concepts of time and weather						•		
28.	2.93	Understand procedures to purchase goods					•			
29.	2.93	Use community agencies and services						•		
30.	2.89	Use banking and financial services					•			

N= 3,483

CASAS, 1995

DUTY AREAS AND COMPETENCIES FOR KENTUCKY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY 1995

DUTY AREA	COMPETENCIES			
01. SCIENCE	1.01 Demonstrate knowledge of natural resources	1.02 Demonstrate knowledge of simple machines	1.03 Discuss properties of classifications of matter	1.04 Discuss factors influencing our environment
	1.05 Demonstrate knowledge of human biology	1.06 Identify characteristics of plants and animals	1.07 Apply scientific methods to life situations	
02. HEALTH EDUC. AND WELL-NESS	2.01 Demonstrate a knowledge of health care systems	2.02 Identify health services available in the community	2.03 Explain how to access health services	2.04 Demonstrate knowledge of patient rights
	2.05 Demonstrate basic life-saving maneuvers	2.06 Distinguish between acute and non-acute health problems	2.07 Demonstrate mental and emotional wellness behaviors and practices	2.08 Explain the relationship of mental and physical health
	2.09 Practice health maintenance behavior and identify high-risk behaviors	2.10 Demonstrate a knowledge of responsible drug and medication use	2.11 Identify measures to maintain a healthy and safe environment	2.12 Practice good grooming and personal hygiene
	2.13 Describe how diseases are transmitted and prevention measures	2.14 Demonstrate ability to complete medical and dental history forms		
03. MATHE-MATICS (COMPU-TATION)	3.01 Compute using whole numbers	3.02 Compute using fractions	3.03 Compute using decimals	3.04 Compute using percentages, ratio, and proportion
	3.05 Convert decimals to fractions or per cent	3.06 Solve word problems	3.07 Apply equations or formulas to solve problems	3.08 Count money and make change
	3.09 Measure geometric shapes, lines, or angles	3.10 Calculate linear dimensions, volume and area	3.11 Calculate units of time	3.12 Interpret scale drawings
	3.13 Interpret and use probability and statistics	3.14 Demonstrate estimation and mental arithmetic skills	3.15 Demonstrate basic knowledge of the metric system	3.16 Demonstrate consumer math skills: i.e., banking, cost comparisons, invoices, interest, and wages
	3.17 Interpret data in maps, charts, tables, and graphs	3.18 Prepare data in table, graph, and chart formats		

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DUTY AREAS AND COMPETENCIES FOR KENTUCKY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

DUTY AREA	COMPETENCIES			
07. FAMILY RELATION-SHIPS	7.01 Identify positive and negative family characteristics	7.02 Identify human life cycle stages	7.03 Demonstrate knowledge of parenting skills	7.04 Discuss different family structures
08. INTER-PERSON-AL/SOCIAL SKILLS	8.01 Demonstrate ability to initiate and carry on conversation	8.02 Demonstrate problem-solving skills	8.03 Demonstrate appropriate behavior in social situations	8.04 Demonstrate teamwork skills for effective group work
09. SELF-MANAGE-MENT SKILLS	9.01 Exhibit self-reliance	9.02 Demonstrate ability to learn on one's own (life-long learning skills)	9.03 Demonstrate time management	9.04 Demonstrate ability to set priorities
	9.05 Evaluate personal needs and goals	9.06 Demonstrate how to locate and use assistance from community resources	9.07 Analyze ability to be flexible and adaptable	9.08 Exhibit resource-fulness
	9.09 Recognize and practice activities to build self-esteem	9.10 Identify the process to obtain a driver's license	9.11 Recognize and demonstrate behaviors appropriate for given situations	9.12 Demonstrate self-control and responsibility for one's own behavior
	9.13 Demonstrate decision making based on one's ethical values	9.14 Demonstrate knowledge of community laws, regulations, and mores	9.15 Identify and select recreational and cultural leisure-time activities	
10. EMPLOY-ABILITY AND OCCUPA-TIONAL	10.01 Demonstrate job-search skills	10.02 Identify information about job training opportunities	10.03 Explore career options and educational requirements	10.04 Describe employee/ employer rights and responsibilities
	10.05 Demonstrate knowledge of work maturity skills			

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WEST VIRGINIA

DRAFT

Work-Based

CORE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

WV Department of Education

Adult Basic Education

* indicates areas that are presently still being revised/refined. Objectives are nearly completed for each competency in three levels: beginning (0-5 grade level), intermediate (6-8 grade level), and advanced (9-12 grade level).

I. Communications

1. Demonstrate a functional vocabulary for a variety of audiences and situations.
2. Comprehend written materials.
3. Interpret data in maps, charts, tables and graphs.
4. Use research tools to locate information.
5. Write legibly.
6. Demonstrate written communication for specific purposes.
7. Demonstrate correct written English grammar and spelling.
8. Demonstrate listening skills.
9. Demonstrate verbal communication skills.
10. Interpret non-verbal communication.

II. Math

1. Compute using whole numbers.
2. Count money and make change.
3. Compute using decimals.
4. Compute using fractions.
5. Compute using percentages.
6. Demonstrate use of ratio and proportions.
7. Demonstrate estimation and mental arithmetic skills.
8. Calculate units of time and measurement.
9. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the metric system.
10. Prepare and interpret data in tables, graphs, maps and charts including scale drawings.
11. Measure and identify linear dimensions.
12. Measure and identify geometric shapes including lines and angles.
13. Calculate area and volume.
14. Apply equations or formulas to solve problems.
15. Interpret and use basic probability and statistics.

***VIII. Career Development**

1. Demonstrate job-search skills.
2. Identify information about job training opportunities.
3. Explore career options and educational requirements.
4. Describe employee/employer rights and responsibilities.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of work maturity skills, including job-keeping skills.

***IX. Wellness and Safety**

1. Identify health services available in the community.
2. Demonstrate basic life-saving maneuvers.
3. Demonstrate mental and emotional wellness behaviors and practices.
4. Practice health maintenance behavior and identify high risk behaviors.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of responsible drug and medication use.
6. Identify measures to maintain a safe home and work environment.
7. Practice good grooming and personal hygiene.

Note: Additional skill areas that are being developed for the parenting and citizenship curriculum tracks include: Family Relationships and Parenting Skills, Law and Citizenship, and Home Care. These are not included in the Work-Based track.

Sample Learner Recognition Activities/Certificates for:

- Colorado
- Delaware

The Colorado State Department of Education

awards this

English as a Second Language

Certificate of Accomplishment

to

_____

For Demonstrating Attainment of all Academic Proficiencies Required for Successful Completion of

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVEL THREE

Given at _____ on _____

_____
William T. Randall, Commissioner

_____
State Board of Education Chair

_____
Dian Bates, State Director Adult Education

_____
State Board of Education Member

_____
Project Director

The Colorado State Department of Education

Awards this

Certificate of Accomplishment

_____

For Demonstrating Attainment of all Academic Proficiencies Required for Successful Completion of

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL THREE

Given at _____ on _____

STATE OF COLORADO 1876

_____

William T. Randall, Commissioner

_____ _____

State Board of Education Chairman — Dian Bates, State Director Adult Education

_____ _____

State Board of Education Member — Project Director

Delaware Certificates of Educational Attainment

Department of Public Instruction
Office of Adult Education
Townsend Building
P O Box 1402
Dover, DE 19903

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Requirements For Application

Individuals enrolled in any skill enhancement program who demonstrate mastery of the skills are eligible to participate in the program. (Residency is established by the local program.)

Procedure to Apply for Delaware Certificate of Educational Attainment

1. Complete an official Delaware Certificate of Educational Attainment Application and Skill Verification Form at the instructional program.

2. The program administrator submits the completed application and skill verification form with the portfolio of supporting documentation to the Department of Public Instruction-Office of Adult Education by the first Friday of each month.

3. The Statewide Review Team approves the application and examines supporting documentation to determine if the individual's portfolio meets the requirements to earn the certificate.

4. The Department of Public Instruction-Office of Adult Education issues the Certificate of Educational Attainment to the instructional program. The student is awarded the Certificate at the program level.

Delaware Certificate of Educational Attainr. 1

To receive the Delaware Certificate of Education Attainment 1 the skills listed below must be demonstrated.

These skills are verified by scoring a minimum of 5.0 on one of the following:
TABE Test Level M - Problem Solving and Computation
ABLE Test Level 2
Learning Unlimited Level B in Math, Level C in Reading
Literacy Volunteers Program Completion
Laubach Literacy Action Program Completion

Mathematics Skills
Place value through millions
Rounding to the nearest thousand
Writing numbers through 999,999
Estimating reasonable answers
Decimals using dollars and cents
Addition of large numbers with regrouping
Subtraction of large numbers with regrouping
Multiplying up to 3 digits by a two-digit number
Dividing large numbers by a one-digit number

Reading Skills
Comprehension
Recognize point of view or bias
Draw an inference
Interpret cause and effect
Find the main idea
Follow a sequence
Follow directions
Find details in a passage
Draw conclusions

Writing Skills
Write clearly and communicate ideas well at the 5.0 level
Write a check using dollars and cents
Two writing samples